

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT POSC 201, 3 Credit Hours

Keystone College

Fall 2003

T/R 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

T/R 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Instructor: Jeff Brauer, MA
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Office Hrs.: M/W 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
T/R 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Or By Appointment

Course Description:

POSC 201 State and Local Government: Studies the general principles and political processes of the states and their subdivisions. Emphasis will be placed on *diversity issues*; intergovernmental relations; state and local politics; elections; the executive, legislative, and judicial functions of states and municipalities. HIST 110 or POSC 101 is recommended prior to this course.

Course Objectives:

- *The students will acquire a knowledge and an understanding of general state and local government principles, state and local political systems, and the politics of contemporary state and local issues, *including civil rights*.
- *The students will demonstrate proficiency with state geography and *geopolitics*.
- *The students will apply state and local government principles through a series of experiential exercises.
- **The students will assess how multicultural and diversity issues impact state and local politics and policy considerations.*
- *The students will further develop their writing, presentation, study, information literacy, research, internet, powerpoint, critical thinking, and *multicultural* skills.

Required Readings:

Politics in States and Communities, 11th ed. – Dye

The Rise of the Creative Class – Florida

A Daily Newspaper, preferably The New York Times

Selected Handouts and Videos

Instructional Methods:

*This course will be taught using a combination of lectures, discussions, experiential exercises, service learning, guest speakers, and videos. This combination is designed to address the learning needs of a class of diverse students. The **emphasis** of the course will be on important themes and trends.*

Attendance:

It is the policy of the college that students should be in every scheduled class. However, **two** unexcused absences will be tolerated. After three unexcused absences, the student's class participation grade will be adversely affected **5%** for each additional unexcused absence. Conversely, **perfect attendance will automatically be rewarded with a class participation grade of at least 90%**. When a student is absent, he/she must obtain the missed materials and make up the work. **Master and Success Students must adhere to their stricter attendance policies.** Exceptions to this attendance policy could be made by the instructor.

Assignments/Exams:

The percent of the final grade of each assignment/exam is in parenthesis. Any assignment/exam which is late will be penalized up to **10%** for each class day until it is completed. The students can, at the discretion of the instructor, redo an assignment for a maximum grade of **90%**. Extra credit is also available at the discretion of the instructor. More information on each of the assignments/exams will be given throughout the semester.

Class Participation (20%)

Before each class, students are expected to fully read the assigned readings. They are then expected to actively participate in all discussions and exercises during class.

Group Project (15%)

*The class will be divided into equal groups. Each group is required to develop and conduct a survey on a civil rights issue at the state and local government level. **The issue and questions for the survey must be approved by the instructor before the survey is conducted.** At the end of the semester, each group will give a professional presentation on the survey by using powerpoint. A bibliography of at least 6 sources including two, and only two, internet sources is required.*

Service Learning Project (10%)

Each student must actively participate in at least one service project offered by the Center of Service Learning during the semester. The project must involve working with a diverse population. After the project, each student must write a reaction essay. The grade will be determined based on the quality of both the participation and the essay. Students may participate in additional service projects for extra credit at the discretion of the instructor.

State Geography/Geopolitics Quiz (5%)

Two Pop Quizzes on the Readings (5% Each)

Unit One Exam (12.5%)

Unit Two Exam (12.5%)

Comprehensive Final Exam (15%)

The quizzes and exams will consist of objective sections and/or essays. Review sessions will be held prior to each exam.

Grading System:

A = 94-100 B = 84-86 C = 74-76 D = 60-66
A- = 90-93 B- = 80-83 C- = 70-73 F = 0-59
B+ = 87-89 C+ = 77-79 D+ = 67-69

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) will only be given because of extenuating circumstances. It will not be given simply because a student did not complete the work.

Academic Honesty:

Any cheating and/or plagiarizing will not be tolerated. It will result in a **0%** for the work involved and will be reported to the Dean of the College.

Academic Support:

Students who are having difficulty with any of the course materials should not hesitate to ask the instructor for extra assistance.

Course Content Outline: (*Unless otherwise noted, most diversity topics can easily be found in the Dye textbook.*)

- I. UNIT ONE – General State and Local Government Principles
 - a. Introduction to Political Science/State and Local Government
 - b. Why Study State and Local Government?
 - c. *Introduction to Diversity Issues (Handouts)*
 - “My Own Diversity”
 - *Ground Rules*
 - “Village of 100”
 - *The Iceberg Conception*
 - *Four Layers of Diversity*
 - *Venn Diagram/Self-Assessment*
 - *Stereotypes vs. Cultural Tendencies*
 - *Five Elements of Cultural Competence*
 - d. Factors that Influence State and Local Government *and Their Policy Implications, Including: (Chapter 1)*
 - *Culture/History*
 - *Race*
 - *Ethnicity*
 - *Social Class*
 - *Gender*
 - *Abilities*
 - *Sexual Orientation*
 - *Immigration*
 - *Geopolitics*
 - e. Democracy and Constitutionalism in the States, *Including: (Chapter 2)*
 - *Cultural Tendencies Toward Direct vs. Representative Democracy*
 - *Ward Connerly and the Citizens’ Initiative to Ban Affirmative Action*

- *The Politics of State Initiatives (prohibiting same-sex marriages, affirmative action and racial preferences)*
 - f. Federalism, *Including: (Chapter 3)*
 - *Faults of Federalism (protected slavery and segregation, allows inequalities)*
 - *The Defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment*
 - *Historic Landmarks in the Development of American Federalism (secession and the Civil War, Brown vs. Board of Education)*
 - g. Participation in State and Local Politics/Parties and Primaries, *Including: (Chapters 4, 5)*
 - *Explaining Voter Turnout (characteristics of voters—gender, race, age, employment, education)*
 - *Race, Ethnicity, and Political Participation (African Americans, Hispanics, Asians)*
 - *Securing the Right to Vote*
 - *Minorities in State Politics*
 - *Al Lawson: From Athlete to Legislator*
 - *Women in State Politics*
 - *Young and Old in State Politics*
 - *Democratic and Republican Party Images and Supporters Nationwide (gender, family income, religion, race, education)*
 - *Runoff Primaries (attacked as racially discriminatory)*
- II. UNIT TWO – State and Local Political Systems
- a. State Political Systems
 1. State Legislatures, *Including: (Chapter 6)*
 - *The Making of a State Legislator (status, occupation, education, wealth)*
 - *Minorities and Women in State Legislatures*
 - *Affirmative Racial Gerrymandering*
 2. Governors, *Including: (Chapter 7)*
 - *The Making of a Governor (backgrounds, age, race, gender)*
 3. State Judicial Branches, *Including: (Chapter 9)*
 - *The Making of a Judge (race, gender, status)*
 - b. Local Political Systems, *Including: (Chapters 10, 11)*
 - *Ron Sims, County Executive*
 - *Types of Cities and Forms of Government (social class)*
 - *At-Large Elections (attacked as racially discriminatory)*
 - *Minority Representation on City Councils*
 - *School Board Members (gender, race, ethnicity)*
 - *Growing Diversity in Metropolitan Areas*
 - *You Don't Have To Be Old To Be Mayor! (Christopher Portman, Kwame M. Kilpatrick)*

- *Minorities and Women in Local Politics (minority mayors, minorities on councils, policy consequences, women in local politics)*
- III. UNIT THREE – The Politics of Contemporary State and Local Issues
 - a. *Economic Development (The Rise of the Creative Class)*
 - *Acceptance of Diversity (particularly homosexuality) as a Key to the Successful Economic Development of a Community*
 - b. *Crime, Including: (Chapter 9)*
 - *The Death Penalty (racial bias?)*
 - c. *Politics and Civil Rights (Chapter 14—the entire chapter deals with diversity issues, including: segregation, busing and racial balancing in schools, affirmative action battles, Hispanic politics, Native Americans and tribal government, Americans with disabilities, gender equality, sexual harassment)*
 - d. *Group Project Presentations*

Jeff Brauer
4/03